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GODFREY CAMBRIDGE

Whether he's talking about middle-income housing ("You're encouraged to join in those community activities -- man, the walls are so thin, you can't help but join in them"), moving into an all-white neighborhood ("I was changing buses in Scarsdale and while I was waiting at the bus stand, property values dropped fifty per cent"), or the all too obvious exclusion of the Negro from even the common advertisement ("Flesh-colored bandage???!!!), Godfrey Cambridge is a brilliantly funny man. He has the gift of the comic who is also an artist, the ability to unveil essential truths of human nature through humor.

His tools -- a wicked flair for satire and an inspired sense of exaggeration. Although Cambridge uses the subject of race as a central part of his material, he takes aim at many another foible of our modern "enlightened"



ways. He may dramatize a Southern movie or explain his Special Rent-a-Negro Plan which provides pseudo-liberal whites with just the right colored type to "integrate" their parties, and he does not always leave his audiences at ease. Godfrey Cambridge, however, invariably leaves them laughing. Just how funny this inimitable comedian can be was evident in his Epic Records' debut LP, HERE'S GODFREY CAMBRIDGE, READY OR NOT. Another recorded example of his wit is now ready for release: THEM COTTON PICKIN' DAYS IS OVER, recorded live at the hungry i in San Francisco during an evening unparalleled for hilarity.

Long recognized as one of the theater's most accomplished actors, Cambridge has played major roles in "Purlie Victorious," "The Blacks," "Detective Story," "Androcles and the Lion" and "Take a Giant Step," among others. For his portrayal of Diouf in Jean Genet's "The Blacks," he won the Obie Award for Most Distinguished Performance of the 1960-61 Season, Off-Broadway. Nominated for the Antoinette Perry Award, Best Feature Actor on Broadway,



1961-62, for his performance as Gitlow in "Purlie Victorious," Cambridge also played that role in the movie version of the play, re-titled "Gone Are the Days." He has been a member of Off-Broadway's "The Living Premise." Godfrey feels that his participation in that famed improvisational troupe added vastly to his spontaneity as a comedian.

Co-starring with other members of "The Living Premise," Cambridge was seen in the zany movie "The Troublemaker," in which he played the part of a corrupt Irish fire inspector. "As soon as I open my mouth with this Irish brogue, the audience cracks up," says Godfrey. Cambridge's other screen credits include a feature role in the highly acclaimed film "The Last Angry Man." He has furthermore appeared in almost every major television series and has been seen on most important interview programs. The sensational reviews he received for a guest appearance on The Jack Paar Show won him an immediate invitation for another performance on the program.



In addition to Godfrey's recent booking at the hungry i, his club engagements have included the Upstairs at the Duplex in New York, the Gate of Horn and the Living Room in Chicago and New York's The Blue Angel.

Born in Harlem, Godfrey Cambridge was educated first in Canada, later in New York. "My parents sent me up there to school so I could learn little hip things such as how to read and write." Returning to New York to attend Flushing High School, Godfrey graduated with honors in three instead of the usual four years and then entered Hofstra College. It was there that he developed a serious interest in acting, and as a member of the school's Green Wig Drama Society, he soon became totally immersed in the theater. After Hofstra came dramatic study and the years of odd jobs that are the usual part of an actor's background. In Cambridge's case they were more varied. "I've worked as a popcorn server, an ambulance driver, an airplane wing cleaner, a bead picker-outer, a marshmallow maker, a Housing Authority inspector and a cab driver."



All obviously had something to offer in training Godfrey for comedy routines.

A seemingly endless series of such occupations ended when Godfrey got his first important Broadway part in "Nature's Way." Cambridge claims that while he had, at age 30, attained extraordinary stature in the American theater, he was, all the time, harbouring ambitions to write a voluminous history of the period of Queen Anne. Second to that, he wanted to be a comedian. A guest shot on the Mike Wallace television show proved Godfrey quite capable of achieving the second aim, if not the first, and when he received an offer to perform on the stage of the famed Apollo Theater in New York, he accepted -- promptly.

Ever since that engagement at the Apollo, Godfrey Cambridge has been convulsing audiences from New York to Philadelphia to Chicago. As an actor, Godfrey Cambridge has made an outstanding contribution to the legitimate theater. As a comedian, he is an inspired, constantly hilarious and indispensable interpreter of the American scene.